CHAPTER 6: WHEN WILL THIS INVASION HAPPEN? - PART B

*POSSIBILITY 3: At the end of the Tribulation - Armageddon.

The Ezekiel Invasion cannot be the Battle of Armageddon, which occurs at the end of the Tribulation, just before the Millennium.
(1) Armageddon is an invasion of all nations from all directions, primarily gathered to attack the Lord Jesus Christ at His Return (Revelation 16:12-21, 19:11-21), whereas the Ezekiel invasion is composed of a few nations, mostly from the north, to destroy Israel and to gather spoil. The purpose of Armageddon is not to gain spoil.

In Ezekiel, there are definite invading nations mentioned that are limited in number, with other nations in opposition. At Armageddon, all nations are allied together against Jerusalem without exception.

(2) Both the means and the location of their destruction is different. In Ezekiel the invaders are destroyed on the mountains of Israel by convulsions of nature. At Armageddon, the invaders are destroyed in the whole area between Petra and Har-Megiddo, by the Lord Himself when He returns in power and glory.

(3) The Ezekiel Invasion happens when Israel is dwelling securely and doing well as a nation in the Land. The Armageddon Campaign takes place during “the Time of Jacob’s Trouble” while Israel is in flight and hiding. This is the climax of the Great Tribulation, the worst ever time on Planet Earth. No one at that time, especially those in Israel, will be dwelling securely at peace.

(4) This view fails to explain the 7 YEAR clear-up operation. It makes no sense that they will be clearing up into the Millennium, which starts with the whole earth, and especially Israel being thoroughly renovated, cleansed, renewed and re-landscaped by God. It is certain they will not spend the first 7 years of the Millennium burning the implements of war left over from the Tribulation, and the first 7 months burying the dead, to “cleanse the Land.” They would not need to use the weapons for fuel during the miraculous prosperity of Christ's Millennial Rule, following the Battle of Armageddon.

(5) No one-world government is functioning during the events in Ezekiel 38. The destruction of Russia, as revealed by God to His prophet, will come at a time when Israel is the central focus of 2 confederations of nations (the Northern confederation of Russia) verses the Western democracies. However, in the Great Tribulation there is a One-World Government united under the antichrist.

(6) The Prophecy of Ezekiel 38-39 constitutes the most detailed description of a future found in Scripture, but it makes no mention of the key things in place at Armageddon, like the Antichrist and his capital (Babylon). Some say Gog is the antichrist, but Gog comes from the North (Ezekiel 38:15), the Antichrist from Revived Rome (Europe). (Daniel 7:8,24,26). Neither does it mention the role of the Messiah, who will be the central figure in the Battle of Armageddon.

(7) All the details of Armageddon (Joel 2, Zechariah 12-14, and Revelation) differ significantly regarding the methods, armaments, identities of the armies, and the ultimate destruction of the enemy, from that described by Ezekiel. Taking these 7 reasons together, we conclude that Ezekiel 38 is not to be confused with Armageddon. Instead, it must occur at least 7 years earlier, at the start of or prior to the 7 year Tribulation Period.

*POSSIBILITY 4: At Mid-Tribulation?
This view identifies the Ezekiel Invasion as the Mid-Tribulation attack of the ‘King of North’ = ‘Syria’ in Daniel 11:40. This invasion is the trigger for antichrist’s entry into Israel, breaking his covenant with Israel which starts the Great Tribulation. Some see this the start of a 3.5 year build up to Armageddon, thus they call this the beginning of the ‘Campaign’ of Armageddon. Hal Lindsey presented this view in his well-known The Late Great Planet Earth.

Although it is true that the events in Daniel 11:40 take place at Mid-Tribulation, it is wrong to identify the King of the North of Daniel 11:40 with Gog of Ezekiel 38. Throughout Daniel references are made to the King of the South (which is always Egypt) and the king of the north (which is consistently applied to Syria). When exponents of this view come to v40 they change this identification to Russia (instead of Syria) and so identify it with Ezekiel 38. Context and consistency demands that it refers to Syria. Thus in Daniel the King of the North is always Syria, but in Ezekiel it is Russia, so it is inconsistent to identify the two. Thus the invasion of Daniel 11:40 must be distinct from the Ezekiel 38 invasion.

At the start of Daniel’s 70th Week, the antichrist will sign a 7-year covenant (treaty) with the nation of Israel, in which he will guarantee Israel's security (Daniel 9:27, Isaiah 28:18). The main reason some believe the War of

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Gog and Magog takes place during this 7-year treaty with antichrist is because Ezekiel 38:11-12 says it occurs at a time when Israel dwells securely. They conclude this refers to a peaceful time for Israel, which must occur during the first part of the 7-year defensive treaty with antichrist. In this view, this treaty will bring about the peaceful and safe conditions envisioned by Ezekiel. Thus Israel's 'dwelling securely' is explained by her trusting in the antichrist covenant. Under the umbrella of this pact they will begin to rebuild their Temple, which will infuriate the Muslim world. Russia will seize this opportunity to gain decisive influence over the whole Middle East and step again on stage as a global super power. She will commit all her forces to an invasion of Israel and will meet the doom described by Ezekiel. It is the collapse of Russia that makes antichrist's global empire possible.

However, the detailed description of this war in Ezekiel 38-39 does not mention the antichrist, or the Revised Roman Empire, or the 7-year treaty, or any expectation by Israel that antichrist will protect them, or antichrist's response to the violation of his treaty, or his betrayal of Israel by refusing to protect her against this attack.

Moreover, the Hebrew for 'dwelling securely' (38:11,14) does not necessarily mean they are in a state of peace, but a security due to confidence in their own strength, which Israel possesses today based on her swift victories in 4 major wars since 1948. It precisely describes her current military situation, of dwelling safely because of her strong armed defence. Moreover, today, her cities and villages are "without walls, bars or gates", just as Ezekiel describes.

Other Objections are:
1. It makes little sense that God would intervene to protect Israel and then immediately afterwards allow her to face the devastation of the Great Tribulation under antichrist.

2. Daniel mentions no Divine Intervention at Mid-Tribulation that destroys this army.

3. This view fails to solve the problem of the 7 months and 7 years. The 7 months of organised burying and the building of a new City requires a state of peace and stability in the nation. But on this view, it would have to take place in a time during the 2nd half of the Tribulation, when Israel has been invaded by antichrist and the Jews are in flight and are not able to bury their own dead, let alone those of the Russians. Thus the state of the Jews in the middle of the Tribulation will not permit 7 months of burial then. This is clearly impossible when you consider their dire situation at this time.

Moreover this view requires the 7 YEARS of burning to not only take place throughout the 2nd half of Tribulation (which has its problems), but also to continue 3.5 years into the Millennium, which is absurd, being inconsistent with Messiah's cleansing and renovation of the whole earth and especially the Land of Israel at its start. Also, in the Millennium there would be no need to get energy in this way.
In fact, all of the above views must be wrong because the clear-up would either extend into the Millennium or into the Eternal State.
*So it must happen at least 7 years before the Return of Christ.

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